



U.S. Army Staff Sergeant Matthew D. Olson

Staff Sergeant Matthew D. Olson is an eight-year Army veteran and is currently serving as part of the *Why We Serve* speakers program. He returned from assignment in Iraq in January 2007 and is speaking to groups around the country about his personal experiences as a Motor Sergeant.

Olson joined the Army in 1999 after graduating from high school and attended Basic Training at Fort Knox, Ky. From January 2003 through January 2007, Olson served as the Motor Sergeant for Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 71st Corps Support Battalion based out of Bamberg, Germany. He was responsible for maintenance and services for 47 various pieces of Army equipment, as well as the health, welfare, and training of all soldiers assigned to the motor pool. During his time in Germany, Olson deployed twice in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Most recently, he deployed to Qayyarah, Iraq, where he managed the maintenance of his unit's vehicles and was in charge of soldiers working in a Combat Logistics Patrol Readiness Center that supported over 2,200 convoys.

A native of Grantsburg, Wis., Olson currently resides in South Carolina and is assigned as the Operations Sergeant for the Wheeled Vehicle Mechanic School at Fort Jackson. He and his wife, Melissa, have a son, Isaac, and are expecting their second child this fall. Olson is also currently pursuing an associate's degree in general studies from Central Texas College.

Olson's decorations include three Army Accommodation Medals, three Army Achievement Medals, two Good Conduct Medals, the National Defense Service Medal, the Iraqi Campaign Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary and Service Medals, the NCO Professional Development Ribbon, the Army Service Ribbon, two Overseas Service Ribbons, and the Meritorious Unit Citation.